

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 5 1. A computer implemented method for profiling a user based on the user's activity, the method comprising:
- assigning one or more topics to each of a plurality of documents based at least in part upon content contained in the documents;
- maintaining an affinity variable associated with the user for each of one or more of the topics assigned to a document attributed to the user;
- determining whether a first affinity variable for the user for a given topic has reached a threshold; and
- 10 associating the user with the given topic for the first affinity variable which reaches the threshold.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises updating the affinity variable for a first topic for each document created by the user to which the first topic is assigned.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises weighting each document created by the user based upon one or more factors.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the one or more factors are selected from the group consisting of a number of documents to which the first topic is assigned, a period of time over which the documents were created by the user, and a closeness of each document to the first
- 20 topic.
5. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable for the user comprises adjusting the affinity variable based upon affinity variables associated with a plurality of second users for the first topic.

6. The method of claim 2, comprising updating the affinity variable for a topic based upon the user's manipulation of a document to which the topic is assigned.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the user's manipulations are selected from the group consisting of adding content to the document, deleting content from the document, sending the document to another user, bookmarking the document, and modifying document metadata.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the user's manipulations comprise adding content to the document and deleting content from the document, comprising assigning a topic to the document based upon content added to or deleted from the document, and wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises updating the affinity variable for the topic assigned to the document based upon the added or deleted content.

9. The method of claim 6, comprising assigning one or more second topics to a document based upon content in the document following the user's manipulation thereof, and wherein the step of updating the affinity variable comprises updating the affinity variable for the one or more second topics.

10. The method of claim 1, comprising storing a content catalog accessible by a plurality of users, which content catalog contains topics associated with documents to which the topics are assigned, and wherein the step of associating the user with the given topic comprises associating the user with the given topic contained in the content catalog.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises storing the affinity variable in a profile associated with the user.

12. The method of claim 11, comprising requesting the user's approval as a condition to associating the user with the given topic contained in the content catalog.

13. The method of claim 12, comprising storing the first affinity variable in the user's profile if the user declines to approve association of the user with the given topic in the content catalog.

14. The method of claim 9, comprising allowing the plurality of users to access the content catalog to identify the user's association with the given topic.

15. The method of 14, comprising establishing communication between the user and one or more of the plurality of user who have identified the user's association with the given topic.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises updating the affinity variable to reflect a passage of time.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the affinity variable is numerical and wherein the step of maintaining the affinity variable comprises increasing the affinity variable for each topic assigned to a document attributed to the user and decreasing the affinity variable to reflect the passage of time.

18. A computerized system for profiling users based on their affinity to content, the system comprising:

a content catalog stored on a memory device which associates documents with topics;

one or more usage metric routines executable by the computerized system for maintaining an affinity value for each user for each of one or more topics assigned to documents attributed to the user;

a plurality of user profiles stored on a memory device containing affinity values maintained for the users; and

a publication agent executable by the computerized system for associating certain topics in the content catalog with certain users based at least in part upon the affinity values contained in the user profiles.

19. The system of claim 18, comprising an association table stored in a memory device containing sets of data relating each user to topics and the documents associated therewith, the association table being accessed by the one or more usage metric routines in maintaining the affinity values.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the user profiles contain only affinity values which have reached a threshold.

21. The system of claim 18, comprising an approval agent executable by the computerized system for

22. A computer readable medium containing program code for, when executed by a computer, causing the computer to perform a method for profiling a user based on the user's activity, the method comprising:

assigning one or more topics to each of a plurality of documents based at least in part upon content contained in the documents;

maintaining an affinity variable associated with the user for each of one or more of the topics assigned to a document attributed to the user;

determining whether a first affinity variable for the user for a given topic has reached a threshold; and

associating the user with the given topic for the first affinity variable which reaches the threshold.